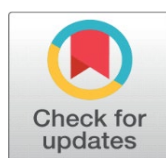
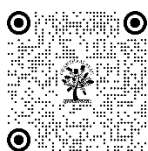


AN ECONOMIC STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN PALAYAMKOTTAI, TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

Dr. G. Dhanalakshmi¹

¹Associate Professor of Economics, Ambai Arts College, Ambasamudram, Tirunelveli, (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, and Tamil Nadu)



DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i6.2024.4074](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i6.2024.4074)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2024 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



ABSTRACT

This study investigates the problems and challenges faced by women in Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli District, with a focus on identifying the factors impeding their empowerment. Despite various initiatives, women in this region continue to struggle with socio-cultural, economic, and educational barriers. The research aims to examine the socio-economic status of women, identify the challenges they encounter, and suggest measures for improving their empowerment. The findings reveal that gender discrimination, early marriages, lack of education, financial constraints, and family restrictions are significant obstacles. The study recommends promoting adult education, skill development, financial assistance programs, healthcare improvements, and the creation of support networks for women. By addressing these challenges, women's empowerment in Palayamkottai can be enhanced, contributing to the region's overall development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment is a crucial aspect of societal development, reflecting the degree to which women can access opportunities and make choices in their personal, social, and economic lives. In Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli district, women face numerous barriers that hinder their empowerment. These include socio-cultural factors, economic constraints, lack of education, and gender discrimination. This study focuses on the problems and challenges that women face in their empowerment journey in Palayamkottai, aiming to identify the factors that impede their progress and the potential solutions to enhance their empowerment.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite various initiatives aimed at enhancing women's status in society, women in Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli District, continue to face numerous challenges that hinder their empowerment. These challenges include limited access to education, economic dependence, gender discrimination, and societal constraints. This study aims to examine the problems and challenges faced by women in this region and provide recommendations for overcoming these barriers to promote their empowerment.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kumar (2020), women empowerment in rural areas, particularly in Tamil Nadu, is hindered by barriers such as limited access to education, economic dependence, and societal constraints, which prevent women from reaching their full potential.

Ramesh and Varghese (2018), socio-cultural factors, gender discrimination, and lack of skill development are significant impediments to women's empowerment in rural communities such as Palayamkottai.

4. OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the socio-economic status of women in Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli District.
2. To identify the major problems and challenges faced by women in the region.
3. To suggest measures to address the identified challenges and enhance women's empowerment.

5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the women living in Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli District, while mentioning key areas of analysis such as socio-economic conditions, education, occupation, income, and challenges regarding empowerment. The mention of 60 respondents provides clarity on the sample size, and it effectively conveys that the study aims to provide insights into broader socio-economic issues affecting women in the region.

6. SOURCES OF DATA

The primary data for this study was collected through surveys and interviews with women residing in Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli District. The data collection was based on structured questionnaires. Secondary data was collected from reports, articles, and studies related to women empowerment.

7. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table No : 1 Age Wise Classification

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 20	7	12
21-30	14	23
31-40	32	53
41- 50	7	12
Total	60	100

Source : Primary Data

The Table No.1 shows that most respondents 53% are in the 31-40 age group, indicating that women in this range face the most empowerment challenges. Only 12% are from the below 20 and 41-50 age groups.

Table No : 2 Education wise Classification

Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Secondary and Below	4	7
Higher Secondary	3	5
Undergraduate	33	55
Postgraduate	20	33
Total	60	100

Source : Primary Data

The Table No. 2 reveals that the majority of respondents 55% are undergraduates, with 33% having postgraduate qualifications. Only 12% have secondary or below education.

Table No : 3 Occupation

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
------------	--------------------	------------

Homemaker	15	25
Private Job	27	45
Government Job	8	13
Self-employed	10	17
Total	60	100

Source : Primary Data

The Table No. 3 indicates that 45% of respondents are employed in private jobs, 25% are homemakers, 17% are self-employed, and 13% hold government jobs.

Table No : 4 Monthly Income

Income	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 5,000	6	10
5,001 – 15,000	18	30
15,001 – 25,000	22	37
25,001 – 35,000	6	10
Above 35,000	8	13
Total	60	100

Source : Primary Data

The Table No. 4 clear that 37% of respondents earn between 15,001 and 25,000, with 30% earning between 5,001 and 15,000. A smaller proportion, 13%, earn above 35,000, while 10% fall in both the below 5,000 and 25,001 to 35,000 income ranges.

Table No : 5 Problems

Problems	No. of Respondents	Rank
Lack of Education	13	I
Lack of Support Networks	8	V
Financial Constraints	12	II
Transportation Challenges	6	VI
Health Issues	10	IV
Family Restrictions	11	III
Total	60	

Source : Primary Data

The Table No. 5 indicates that the most significant problem faced by respondents is the lack of education, ranked first, followed by financial constraints in second place. Family restrictions and health issues are ranked third and fourth, respectively. The lack of support networks and transportation challenges are ranked lower, with support networks being the fifth and transportation challenges the sixth most reported problem.

Table No : 6 Challenges

Challenges	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender Discrimination	16	27
Lack of skill Development	12	20
Dowry Practices	8	13
Early Marriage	14	23
Economic Dependence	10	17
Total	60	100

Source : Primary Data

The Table No. 6 shows that 27% of respondents face gender discrimination as a major challenge, followed by 23% citing early marriage. Other significant challenges include lack of skill development 20%, economic dependence 17%, and dowry practices 13%.

8. HYPOTHESIS

The Chi-Square test was conducted to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the occupation and challenges.

The calculated Chi-Square value is 3, which is lower than the table value of 21.03 at the 5% significance level. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant relationship between occupation and challenges.

9. FINDINGS

- 53% fall in the 31–40 age group, indicating that women in this range face significant empowerment challenges.
- 55% of the respondents are undergraduates, indicating that a significant portion of women in the area has completed at least higher secondary education but may still face challenges in further academic or professional advancement.
- 45% are employed in private jobs, making it the predominant occupation.
- The majority of respondents, 37%, earn a monthly income between ₹15,001 and ₹25,000.
- The most significant problem identified by respondents is the lack of education, with 13 respondents ranking it first, followed by financial constraints 12 respondents and family restrictions 11 respondents.
- 27% of the respondents cited gender discrimination as the most significant challenge, emphasizing the persistent societal barrier that limits women's empowerment.

10. SUGGESTIONS

- Promote adult education and skill development programs for women to enhance their qualifications and employment opportunities.
- Implement financial assistance programs for women, especially those in low-income groups, to reduce their economic dependence.
- Conduct awareness campaigns to tackle gender discrimination and early marriages.
- Provide better healthcare facilities for women to address health issues that may affect their participation in economic and social activities.
- Strengthen support networks for women, including community groups and NGOs, to provide emotional and social support, and improve access to resources.

11. CONCLUSION

The study on women empowerment in Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli District, reveals significant barriers that hinder women's progress in various aspects of life, including education, employment, and social standing. Despite improvements in educational qualifications and employment opportunities, challenges such as gender discrimination, financial constraints, and early marriage continue to affect women's empowerment. The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions, including educational and skill development programs, financial support, and societal awareness campaigns. By addressing these challenges through focused strategies, the empowerment of women in Palayamkottai can be enhanced, contributing to broader societal development.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

- Kumar, R. (2020). Women Empowerment in Rural Areas: Challenges and Opportunities. *Journal of Rural Development Studies*, 18(3), 45-60.
- Ramesh, S., & Varghese, M. (2018). Socio-cultural Barriers and Gender Discrimination in Women's Empowerment. *International Journal of Gender and Development*, 22(2), 89-104.